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SENSITIVE
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FOR EAP/MTS AND IO/PSC

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SUBJECT: UN MISSION IN TIMOR-LESTE: ZERO TOLERANCE ON SEXUAL ABUSE
AND EXPLOITATION

REF: STATE 57469

Summary

¶1. (SBU) The United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) continues to uphold its commitment to a zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). In 2008, UNMIT investigated one SEA allegation. The allegation was dismissed in 2008 due to a lack of evidence. There were no allegations of SEA involving UNMIT personnel in 2009. UNMIT continues to include SEA training as part of its mandatory orientation course for new personnel. A Timorese women's rights NGO and the government's Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice did not find any SEA cases involving UNMIT personnel in 2009 and described their relationship with UNMIT as positive. A woman from Oecusse continues to publicly petition the UN to intervene on her behalf to secure child support from a United Nations Police Officer who had a marital relationship with her from 2001-2003. The Vulnerable Persons Unit (VPU), tasked with investigating sex crimes, continues to operate as part of the police's investigative division and found no cases of SEA involving UNMIT personnel in 2009. Prostitution is legal in Timor-Leste. While anecdotal evidence of foreigners patronizing prostitutes is credible, charges that UNMIT personnel make up a significant portion of the clientele are unsubstantiated. UNMIT is taking an active role in combating trafficking in persons and sexual exploitation. End Summary.

No substantiated allegations of sexual exploitation or abuse

¶2. (U) There have been no substantiated cases of SEA by UNMIT personnel in 2009, according to UNMIT officials, the National Police of Timor-Leste's (PNTL) VPU, the government's Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice, and a leading Timorese women's rights NGO, the Communication Forum for Timorese Women (Fokupers). UNMIT conducted one investigation of an SEA allegation in 2008. The case was promptly dismissed due to lack of relevant evidence.

13. (U) There remains some concern that UNMIT officials posted in rural areas may be more susceptible to SEA violations due to a blend of cultural customs (families offering a daughter to important visitors) and weaker institutional oversight than in Dili. There have been no allegations or cases of SEA by UNMIT personnel posted in rural areas in 2009.

UNMIT policy: zero tolerance on sexual exploitation and abuse

14. (U) UNMIT has an officially declared zero tolerance policy on SEA, based on the UN Secretary General's guidance to implement UN General Assembly resolution 57/2006. The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) to Timor-Leste, Atul Khare, has demonstrated a firm commitment to uphold this policy, frequently highlighting the importance of SEA prevention in public statements and monthly town hall meetings with UNMIT personnel.

15. (U) UNMIT focuses its SEA policy on prevention, according to UNMIT's Adviser for Conduct and Discipline. All UNMIT employees - police forces and civilians - receive an orientation packet that provides information on UNMIT's zero tolerance policy on SEA, including the code of conduct, how to report SEA, and a list of off-limits bars. One orientation packet explicitly

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states that sex with anyone under 18 is prohibited. To avoid public perception problems regarding SEA, UNMIT officials are not allowed to even park their vehicles near off-limits bars. UNMIT employees also attend an orientation program that includes a detailed presentation on UNMIT's SEA policy. The Office of Conduct and Discipline also performed random inspections of known prostitution nightclubs to ascertain whether UN personnel are entering.

Women's Rights NGO, Government's Ombudsman, and PNTL Report No
SEA Cases in 2009

16. (U) Fokupers received no information on SEA cases in 2008 and 2009 related to UNMIT personnel. According to Fokupers, there remains concern regarding past cases of UNMIT - specifically United Nations Police Officers (UNPOL) - officials impregnating Timorese women, leaving the country, and not taking responsibility for children after they depart. No cases have been reported in 2009 to date. Fokupers described the overall UNMIT presence, including on SEA prevention, as positive.

17. (SBU) Fokupers highlighted the case of Ligia Maria Lily Nheu. Ms. Nheu is a Timorese-Chinese native of Oecusse who has submitted a grievance to the UN regarding the paternity of former UN Police Officer Goran Susnja. Mr. Susnja was assigned to Oecusse in 2001. He married Ms. Nheu in 2002 and moved with her to Bosnia. Ms. Nheu, while pregnant, left Bosnia for Timor-Leste in 2003 after their relationship ended. She gave birth to a son in 2003. Ms. Nheu has received USD 340.00 in child support payments from Mr. Susnja since the birth of their

son. In 2008, Mr. Susnja offered Ms. Nheu USD 400.00 in child support payments per year, but Ms. Nheu declined the offer claiming it was insufficient. She wants the UN to offer her assistance in locating and forcing Mr. Susnja to accept parental responsibility and pay regular child support payments for her son's health, welfare, and education. Ms. Nheu has utilized public media to bring attention to her case. According to Special Representative of the Secretary General Atul Khare, Susnje has left UN service. The UN has urged, in a written, formal appeal from UN Headquarters, the Bosnian government to take action on the matter.

¶18. (U) The Timor-Leste Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice reported there were no SEA allegations reported to date in 2009, and described the relationship with both UNMIT and women's rights NGOs as collaborative and positive. He also underscored UNMIT's commitment to train and educate their personnel on SEA prevention.

¶19. (U) The National Police in Dili District continue to operate the Vulnerable Persons Unit (VPU). Operating as a sub-unit of the Criminal Investigation Division, the VPU will provide protection and support to victims of sex crimes. The VPU works in collaboration with UNPOL. No crimes involving UN personnel were reported in 2009.

¶10. (U) During the preparation of this report, post interviewed several officials of the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), leaders of women's and human rights NGOs, officials from the Office of the Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice (Provedor), and an official from the Vulnerable Persons Unit of the PNTL.
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